

DEPARTMENT
OF
FINANCE

GUIDE THROUGH
THE EXAM PROCESS

CALIFORNIA



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PREFACE



“I WANT TO WORK FOR THE

STATE. THEY TOLD ME I

HAVE TO TAKE A TEST TO

BE HIRED. WHAT KIND OF

A TEST IS IT? A QAP? WHAT

IS THAT? AN INTERVIEW?

OH, OKAY. CAN I TAKE IT

TOMORROW? NO? WELL,

WHEN CAN I TAKE IT? THIS

IS SO CONFUSING! HELP!

At one time or another, all of us in state service have been in a situation similar to the one described on the left. Getting into state service seems lengthy and complicated to anyone who is not familiar with the civil service examination process. This handbook has been designed to help you understand that process and start you on your way to a successful career in state service.

In the first sections of the handbook, you will find general information on examinations: announcements, applications and components. The last part of the handbook is focused on the interview process. You will be offered helpful hints on how to prepare yourself and how to answer questions during interviews.

If you need further information about the examination process, please write to the address given below or call one of the telephone numbers listed.

California Department of Finance
Human Resources Office
915 L Street
Sacramento, CA 95814
Telephone: (916) 323-4071
www.dof.ca.gov

The California Relay (Telephone) Service for the Deaf or Hearing Impaired is available as follows:

From TDD phone: 1-800-735-2929
From Voice phone: 1-800-735-2922

State civil service jobs are filled by examinations open to all who meet the entrance requirements regardless of race, color, faith, national origin, ancestry, sex, marital status, disability, religious or political affiliation, age, or sexual orientation.

California residency is not required, and U.S. citizenship is required only for those wanting to become peace officers.

EXAMINATION PROCESS



ELEVEN STEPS

1. Management of a State department determines the need for an examination.
 2. Examination is scheduled by testing agency.
 3. Examination announcements or bulletins are released.
 4. Candidates submit applications.
 5. Applications are reviewed to determine whether candidates meet the requirements for admittance to the examination.
 6. Candidates meeting requirements for admittance are scheduled for and notified of examination.
 7. Examination is administered.
 8. Final scores are assigned.
 9. Candidates are notified of test results.
 10. Information list is released and made available for public review.
 11. Management hires individuals from list as vacancies occur.
-

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EXAMINATION COMPONENTS

INTRODUCTION	<p>Examinations are used to establish lists of qualified candidates from which hires may be made. All examinations consist of at least one component that assesses a candidate's knowledge and/or abilities relative to the classification being examined. The most common examination components are described as follows:</p>
WRITTEN EXAMINATION	<p>A written examination is timed and consists of multiple-choice and/or essay questions that address the knowledge and abilities identified for the classification. The written examination may be only one part of the overall examination. It is sometimes followed by a self-assessment report or an interview or both.</p>
PROMOTIONAL READINESS EXAMINATION (PRE)	<p>A promotional readiness examination is designed for current State employees and includes the completion of a self-assessment report by the candidate, written comments from his or her immediate supervisor and a reviewing (second-level) supervisor, and an interview in which candidates are asked to answer predetermined questions.</p>
PERFORMANCE EXAMINATION	<p>A performance examination is work-sample test. The candidate is required to demonstrate specific skills by performing actual segments of work, using tools, materials, equipment, and methods characteristic of the job for which the test is designed.</p>
EDUCATION AND EXPERIENCE EXAMINATION (E & E)	<p>An education and experience examination consists solely of a rating of the candidate's education and experience as presented on the application. This type of examination is used for very small candidate groups (three to ten persons) subject to administrative requirements. The resulting list is limited to three ranks, and all candidates who meet the requirements for admittance to the examination will be ranked in one of the three passing ranks.</p>
QUALIFICATIONS APPRAISAL PANEL (QAP) EXAMINATION	<p>A qualifications appraisal panel examination consists of an interview only. Predetermined questions with suggested responses are used, and, as in all of the examinations, candidates are rated competitively.</p>

EXAMINATION NOTIFICATION



METHODS

The State of California uses several methods to notify prospective candidates of upcoming examinations. Among these methods are:

- ◆ Distribution of bulletins to various State departments, the State Personnel Board, and local Employment Development Department field offices All current "Open" exam bulletins can be accessed on SPB's web site at www.spb.ca.gov.
- ◆ Telephone recordings providing information on upcoming examinations (used by some State departments).
- ◆ Advertisements in the media.
- ◆ Presentations at job fairs and meetings of community organizations as well as

EXAMINATION BULLETINS

DESCRIPTION

Examination bulletins are announcements that provide applicants with important details and helpful information concerning a specific examination. Bulletins are color coded to distinguish among different types of examinations.

Anyone who meets the minimum requirements for open examinations may apply. You do not have to be a State employee to qualify. Promotional examinations may be taken only by State employees.

COLOR CODING

COLOR	TYPE OF EXAMINATION
White	Open or open/nonpromotional examinations.
Blue	Open or open/nonpromotional continuous filing. Testing is done at various intervals throughout the year as needed.
Blue	LEAP (Limited Examination and Appointment Program). This testing program allows alternate entry into State service for persons with disabilities. Candidates must be certified by the Department of Rehabilitation to qualify.
Green	Open/spot examinations. Geographic location(s) for which the examination is being given are specified.
Pink	Promotional examinations. State employees who meet minimum requirements may compete in these examinations.

BULLETIN FACSIMILE

A facsimile of a Department of Finance Bulletin is on the following two pages (front and back sides). The typical information is enumerated with a corresponding description

- 1 Name, address, and telephone number of testing agency.
- 2 Exam title. The name of the classification for which the examination is being held.
- 3 Exam type. The type of examination being given.
- 4 Position description. Describes the major responsibilities and duties for the class and the location of current or anticipated vacancies and/or positions.
- 5 Monthly salary ranges.
- 6 How and where to apply. Location and address where applications for the examination must be received.
- 7 Final filing date. The last day on which applications will be accepted for the examination.
- 8 Instructions for persons with disabilities.
- 9 Identification requirements.
- 10 Requirements for admittance to the examination. Minimum qualifications may include education and experience as well as any certificate or license requirements, "special personal characteristics," or "additional desirable qualifications."
- 11 Education/Experience Requirements
- 12 Examination information. Various parts of the test and the weights of each. For example, written test 40 percent, interview 60 percent, or interview may be weighted 100 percent. (The total of all parts of an examination will be 100 percent.)

BULLETIN



◆ EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYER ◆ COMMITTED TO A DRUG-FREE STATE WORKPLACE ◆

2 ASSISTANT FINANCE BUDGET ANALYST

EXAMINATION TYPE	3	This is a departmental promotional examination. Applicants must have a permanent civil service appointment with the Department of Finance as of the final filing date to compete in this exam.
POSITION DESCRIPTION	4	The Assistant Finance Budget Analyst is the entry and first working level in the series. Incumbents, under supervision, perform analytical and consultative duties of average difficulty which are necessary to carry out the budget management functions of the Department of Finance. Assistant Finance Budget Analyst incumbents analyze, review, and make independent recommendations upon the budgetary and related fiscal affairs of one or more State agencies or departments; will be responsible for budget preparation including revenue forecasts, budget defense, and presentation; administration and control of approved expenditure plans; make surveys and investigations of operating agencies and consult with and advise responsible agency officials on fiscal organization, fiscal procedure and related problems, analyze budget requests and perform continuous budgetary control of appropriations; analyze legislation and prepare policy and issue analyses to summarize for either revenue or expenditure issues; analyze and justify budget programs; gather data and make studies on various problems arising in connection with financial administration; give information and instructions to officers and employees of State agencies concerning specific phases of budget and financial procedures; prepare reports and correspondence. Positions exist with the Department of Finance in Sacramento.
MONTHLY SALARY RANGE	5	\$3289 - \$3997
HOW AND WHEN TO APPLY	6	Submit "Examination And/Or Employment Application" (Std. 678) to the Department of Finance, Human Resources Office, 915 L Street, 6th Floor, Sacramento, CA 95814. Applications must be submitted and/or postmarked by August 31, 2000 , the final filing date. Applications filed in person, delivered or received via interoffice mail after 5:00 p.m. on the final filing date, or postmarked after the final filing date will NOT be accepted for any reason. DO NOT SUBMIT APPLICATIONS TO THE STATE PERSONNEL BOARD.
SPECIAL EXAMINATION ARRANGEMENTS	7	Reasonable Accommodation will be provided to applicants who need assistance to take an interview or written test. If you answered "Yes" to Question 2, you will be contacted via telephone or mail to make specific arrangements.
REQUIRED IDENTIFICATION	9	Accepted applicants are required to bring either a photo identification card or two forms of signed identification to each phase of the examination.
REQUIREMENTS FOR ADMITTANCE TO THE EXAMINATION	10	Applicants who are within six months of satisfying the experience or education requirements will be admitted to the examination, but must fully meet the experience or education requirements before being eligible for appointment. It is the responsibility of all applicants to provide complete and detailed descriptions of qualifying experience to substantiate minimum qualifications. This information is critical in determining acceptance into any examination.
ELIGIBLE LIST INFORMATION		A departmental promotional eligible list will be established for the Department of Finance. Names of successful competitors are merged into the list in order of final scores, regardless of date. Eligibility expires 12 months after it is established.
MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS	11	Qualifying experience may be combined on a proportionate basis if the requirements stated below include more than one pattern and are distinguished as Either "I", or "II", or "III", etc. For example, candidates possessing qualifying experience amounting to 50% of the required time of Pattern I, and additional experience amounting to 50% of the required time of Pattern II, may be admitted to an examination as meeting 100% of the overall experience requirement. Either I Experience: One year of experience in the California State service performing the duties of a Junior Staff Analyst, Range B. Persons applying experience toward this pattern must have had a full-time assignment in California State service preparing, justifying and analyzing, or controlling and administering budgets or budgetary programs or analysis and forecasting of revenues. Or II Education: Possession of a Master's Degree in Public Policy, Public or Business Administration, Political Science, Economics, or related field. Or III Experience: Two years of progressively responsible experience with duties involving the preparation, justification, and analysis or the control and administration of a budget or budgetary program or analysis and forecasting of revenues. (Experience in California State service applied toward this pattern must include one year of experience performing duties comparable in level of responsibility of a Junior Staff Analyst, Range B.) (One year of graduate work in public policy, public or business administration, political science, economics, or a related field may be substituted for one year of the required experience.) AND Education: Equivalent to graduation from college. (Additional qualifying experience may be substituted for the required education on a year-for-year basis.)
ADDITIONAL DESIRABLE QUALIFICATIONS		Demonstrated ability to act independently; flexibility; tact; and ability to act effectively under pressure.
EXAMINATION INFORMATION	12	This is an Education and Experience examination weighted 100%. Completion and submittal of the "Examination And/Or Employment Application" (Std. 678) by the final filing date will constitute the entire examination. The applications will be evaluated and scored based on a set of rating criteria. To obtain a position on the eligible list, applicants must achieve a minimum rating of 85.00%. On your application (Std. 678) or an attachment, clearly indicate names, titles, organizations and dates with a concise explanation of the most important duties performed. It is especially important that each candidate take special care in accurately and completely filling out his or her application. List all experience relative to the "Requirements For Admittance To The Examination" and "Minimum Qualifications" shown on this announcement, even if that experience goes beyond the seven-year limit printed on the applications. Supplementary information will be accepted, but read the "Requirements For Admittance To The Examination" and "Minimum Qualifications" carefully to determine what kind of information will be useful to the staff doing the evaluation.

ASSISTANT FINANCE BUDGET ANALYST

SEE REVERSE SIDE FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION
LF26-5268 0FI16

FINAL FILING DATE August 31, 2000

- 13 Scope of each test part. Knowledge and abilities required for the classification.
- 14 Extra credits. In some exams, veterans' preference or career credits are added to a candidate's final score. Veterans' preference credit is granted in entrance-level open examinations only. Career credits apply to open/nonpromotional exams only.
- 15 General information. Contains general information about State civil service laws and rules pertaining to examinations.

Assistant Finance Budget Analyst

Release Date: August 11, 2000

EXAMINATION SCOPE

Candidates will be tested on:

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A. Knowledge of:

1. Analytical procedures and methods.
2. Research techniques.
3. Statistical principles and procedures.
4. Principles of organization and management.
5. Principles and practices of public finance.
6. Principles and practices of governmental budgeting and accounting.

B. Ability to:

1. Gather and analyze data.
2. Reason logically.
3. Follow written and oral instructions.
4. Speak and write effectively.
5. Draw valid conclusions and make appropriate recommendations.
6. Gain and maintain cooperative relationships with those contacted during the course of work.

VETERANS PREFERENCE

Veterans preference credits is not granted in promotional examinations.

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15 GENERAL INFORMATION

It is the candidate's responsibility to contact the **Human Resources Office at (916) 323-4071, TDD (916) 324-6547** three days prior to the written test date if he/she has not received his/her notice.

For an examination without a written feature it is the candidate's responsibility to contact the **Human Resources Office at (916) 323-4071, or TDD 324-6547** three weeks after the final filing date if he/she has not received a progress notice.

If a candidate's notice of oral interview or performance test fails to reach him/her prior to the day of the interview due to a verified postal error, he/she will be rescheduled upon written request.

Applications are available at State Personnel Board offices, local offices of the Employment Development Department and the Department noted on the front. Applications also available by accessing the State Personnel Board's website at <http://www.spb.ca.gov/jobsgen/formsrd.cfm>.

If you meet the requirements stated on the reverse, you may take this examination, which is competitive. Possession of the entrance requirement does not assure a place on the eligible list. Your performance in the examination described on the other side of this bulletin will be compared with the performance of the others who take this test, and all candidates who pass will be ranked according to their scores.

The State Personnel Board reserves the right to revise the examination plan to better meet the needs of the service if the circumstances under which this examination was planned change. Such revision will be in accordance with civil service law and rules and all competitors will be notified.

Examination Locations: When a written test is part of the examination, it will be given in such places in California as the number of candidates and conditions warrant. Ordinarily, oral interviews are scheduled in Sacramento, San Francisco, and Los Angeles. However, locations of interviews may be limited or extended as conditions warrant.

Eligible Lists: Eligible lists established by competitive examination, regardless of date, must be used in the following order: 1) subdivisional promotional, 2) departmental promotional, 3) multidepartmental, 4) servicewide promotional, 5) departmental open, 6) open. When there are two lists of the same kind, the older list will be used first. Eligible lists will expire in one to four years unless otherwise stated on this bulletin.

Promotional Examinations Only: Competition is limited to employees who have a permanent civil service appointment. Under certain circumstances other employees may be allowed to compete under provisions of Rules 234, 235, and 235.2. State Personnel Board Rules 233, 234, 235, 235.2 and 237 contain provisions regarding civil service status and eligibility for promotional examinations. These rules may be reviewed at departmental personnel offices or at the Information Counter of State Personnel Board offices.

General Qualifications: Candidates must possess essential personal qualifications including integrity, initiative, dependability, good judgment, and ability to work cooperatively with others; and a state of health consistent with the ability to perform the assigned duties of the class. A medical examination may be required. In open examinations, investigation may be made of employment records and personal history and fingerprinting may be required.

Interview Scope: If an interview is conducted, in addition to the scope described on the other side of this bulletin, the panel will consider education, experience, personal development, personal traits, and fitness. In appraising experience, more weight will be given to the breadth and recency of pertinent experience and evidence of the candidate's ability to accept and fulfill increasing responsibilities than to the length of his/her experience. Evaluation of a candidate's personal development will include consideration of his/her recognition of his/her own training needs; his/her plans for self-development; and the progress he/she has made in his/her efforts towards self-development.

High School Equivalence: Equivalence to completion of the 12th grade may be demonstrated in any one of the following ways: 1) passing the General Educational Development (GED) Test; 2) completion of 12 semester units of college-level work; 3) certification from the State Department of Education, a local school board, or high school authorities that the candidate is considered to have education equivalent to graduation from high school; or 4) for clerical and accounting classes, substitution of business college work in place of high school on a year-for-year basis.

College Equivalence: Equivalent degree (certificate)(diploma) approved by the California Superintendent of Public Instruction under the provisions of California Education Code Section 94310(b).

State Drug Policy: It is an objective of the State of California to achieve a drug-free state workplace. Any applicant for state employment will be expected to behave in accordance with this objective because the use of illegal drugs is inconsistent with the law of the state, the rules governing civil service, and the special trust placed in public servants.

TDD is Telecommunications Device for the Deaf and is reachable only from phones equipped with a TDD Device.

California Relay Telephone Service For The Deaf or Hearing-Impaired

From TDD Phones: 1-800-735-2929

From Voice Phones: 1-800-735-2922

DT/P (Rev. 10/86)

doctoral program. Honorary degrees are *unacceptable*.

To apply for an examination with the State of California, you must complete a State application form (Form STD 678). The forms are available in all departmental personnel offices, at the State Personnel Board or online at <http://exams.spb.ca.gov/capp.htm>, and at Employment Development Department (EDD) field offices.

Take time with your application. Make sure that it is correct and that it can be clearly read. (If possible, have it typed.) Completion of the application is, after all, part of the examination process. It demonstrates your ability to follow instructions carefully and accurately.

Review your application for accuracy, spelling, neatness, and legibility. Make a copy for review prior to your interview. The panel will have the original and may ask you for a brief summary or clarification of your education and/or experience.

Submit your application by the final filing date to the testing agency indicated on the exam bulletin. Applications postmarked, personally delivered, or received through interoffice mail after the final filing date will not be accepted.

If the bulletin indicates that you must “file in person” for the examination, you must deliver your application to the location listed on the bulletin **during** the specific hours given. Applications mailed to the office for a “file in person” examination will not be accepted.

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15. Education information should always be completed. If the class calls for specific coursework, you also need to list the courses on the application (or provide an attachment).

17. Work experience is described in this section. You should start with your most recent experience and work back, including up to seven years of past experience (or more if the specific experience for this classification was prior to that time). Indicate dates of experience, full-time or part-time work, the number of hours you worked per week, and the name and address of your employer. If you held more than one position involving different duties with the same employer, list each position separately. Be precise about the responsibilities of your position. List volunteer work experience as well as paid work experience. Make sure that you have included experience that relates specifically to the classification for which you are applying.

STATE OF CALIFORNIA

EXAMINATION AND/OR EMPLOYMENT APPLICATION

STD. 678 (REV. 8-97) Page 5

EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY *(For Examination Use Only)*

APPLICANT: To assist the State of California in its commitment to Equal Employment Opportunity, applicants are asked to voluntarily provide the following information. This questionnaire will be separated from the application prior to the examination and will not be used in any employment decisions. Government Code Section 19705 authorizes the State Personnel Board to retain this information for research and statistical purposes.

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STATE SECURITY NUMBER _____

AGE _____

☐ (1) UNDER 21 ☐ (3) 21 - 39 ☐ (5) 40 - 69 ☐ (7) 70 AND OVER

GENDER _____

☐ MALE

☐ FEMALE

Ethnic Category (Please check the box that best describes your race/ethnicity.):

☐

(7) AMERICAN INDIAN OR ALASKANNATIVE-- Persons having origins in any of the tribal peoples of North America, and who maintain cultural identification through tribal affiliation or community recognition.

ENTER TRIBAL IDENTIFICATION OR AFFILIATION _____

☐

(2) ASIAN-- Persons having origins in any of the original peoples of the Far East, Southeast Asia, or the Indian Subcontinent. This includes China, Japan, and Korea.

☐

(7) BLACK-- Persons having origins in any of the black racial groups of Africa.

☐

(8) FILIPINO-- Persons having origins in any of the original peoples of the Philippine Islands.

☐

(4) HISPANIC-- Persons of Mexican, Puerto Rican, Cuban, Central or South American, or other Spanish culture or origin, regardless of race.

☐

(6) PACIFIC ISLANDERS-- Persons having origins in the Pacific Islands, such as Samoa.

☐

(5) WHITE-- Persons having origins in any of the original peoples of Europe, North Africa, or the Middle East.

Check if:

☐

(3) OTHER (Specify) _____

☐

(7) DISABLED-- A person with a disability is an individual who: (1) has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more life activities, such as walking, speaking, breathing, performing manual tasks, seeing, hearing, learning, caring for oneself or working, . . . ; (2) has a record of such an impairment; (3) is regarded as having such an impairment.

☐

MILITARY-- A military veteran; a widow or widower of a veteran; or a spouse of a 100% disabled veteran.

How did you learn of this Examination?

☐ TELEPHONE JOB LINE

☐ WORD OF MOUTH

☐ INTERNET

☐ ADVERTISEMENT IN _____

☐ EXAMINATION BULLETIN LOCATED AT _____

APPLICATION REVIEW



MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS

Once your application is received, it will be reviewed to determine whether you meet the requirements for admittance to the examination. The requirements are commonly referred to as the minimum requirements for the classification.

If you meet the minimum requirements, you will receive a notice in the mail indicating that you will be admitted to the examination and will be given information about the next phase of the examination (written test, performance test, interview and so on.) This process usually takes three to four weeks after the final filing date has passed.

If you do not meet the minimum requirements, you will receive a notice in the mail informing you of that determination. You will then be allowed seven working days from the date of the notice to provide any additional information that you feel may qualify you for the examination. It is possible that the information on your application was not clearly stated, was misinterpreted, or was inadvertently left out.

RIGHT TO APPEAL

If, after you have provided additional information, you are still not admitted to the examination and you feel that you meet the minimum requirements, you have the right to file an appeal with the State Personnel Board. (See the examination appeal process section for more information.)

INTERVIEW PREPARATION

APPLICATION REVIEW

Keep a copy of your application and review it carefully before the interview. This could be the only document that the interview panel has when the interview begins. Panels often use the application as the starting point of the interview. They may begin by asking you to summarize your education and experience. Make sure that you are able to state the sequence and dates of the education and experience you have listed on the application. You should also be prepared to summarize those aspects of your background that you think make you a qualified competitor in that examination. You may wish to take your copy of the application with you to the interview in case you think you may not be able to remember all of the details. Or you may take a brief outline or notes you have prepared about the education and experience you want to include in your interview.

STUDY SPECIFICATIONS

Study the examination bulletin and/or class specifications. The interview panel will have both of these to guide them in rating you. The knowledge, abilities, skills, and special personal characteristics needed for the classification for which the examination is being given are stated in these documents. These are the areas in which you will be asked questions.

KNOWLEDGE OF DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Never go into an interview without any knowledge of the duties and responsibilities of the classification for which the examination is being given. Talk to people who work in the class, their supervisors, and others who have knowledge about the work of the classification concerned. Show that you are genuinely interested in performing the duties of the classification.

REQUIRED QUALIFICATIONS

Think through each qualification required. Try to think of the kinds of questions you would ask if you were a member of the interview panel. How well can you answer those questions? Try especially to appraise your own knowledge and background in each area as measured against requirements of the classification concerned. If you have weaknesses in some areas, be prepared to discuss what you *are doing* and have done to overcome them.

PREPARE FOR YOUR WEAK SPOTS

Do some general reading in areas in which you feel you may be weak. For example, if the job involves supervision and your past experience has not included supervising others, some general reading about supervisory methods and practices may be useful. It may also be helpful to study agency procedures or detailed manuals.

REST AND CARE FOR YOURSELF

Get a good night's sleep and watch your general health and mental attitude. You will want a clear head at the interview. Take care of a cold or other minor ailments. Do not take any stimulants or medication before your interview unless it has been prescribed by a doctor and you are sure it won't have a detrimental effect on your presentation.

INTERVIEW DAY

TIMELY ARRIVAL	<p>Give yourself plenty of time to get to the interview. Plan to arrive somewhat ahead of the scheduled time, particularly if you are unsure of the location. You may want to take along a copy of your application to review as well as reading material in case you have to wait a while. In any event, try to relax and compose yourself. Remember that even the calmest, most self-assured people are usually somewhat nervous before an interview.</p>
PERSONAL APPEARANCE	<p>Personal appearance is important. You are not given a score for appearance, manners, attitudes and expressions. However, they are important in determining the interview panel's overall impression of you. Show that the interview is important to you. Give careful attention to your personal appearance. Dress your best but not your flashiest. And be sure, above all, that you are immaculate.</p>
INTERVIEWERS	<p>When you arrive at the interview location, note the names of the panel members for your interview. Names and titles are usually posted near the interview room. For future reference, you will want to remember who was on your panel.</p>
MAKE IT WORK FOR YOU	<p>Remember that the interview panel's job is to help you do your best. At times you might feel that the panel, individually and collectively, is trying to seek out only your negative attributes. Your impression would be incorrect. Panel members are obligated to make a fair and impartial appraisal of your qualifications for the classification in question and must consider both your strengths and your weaknesses. They want to see you in your best light. But also keep in mind that the panel must interview all candidates and that a noncooperative or complaining candidate may not do well in the interview, even though the panel tries to bring out the candidate's strongest attributes. It is in your best interest to help the panel see you at your best.</p>
DISPLAY CONFIDENCE	<p>Be natural. Keep your attitude enthusiastic and confident. The interview panel is interested in a positive presentation. Do not apologize for your weaknesses; try to bring out your strong points. If you are not reasonably confident that you can do the job, do not expect the interview panel to be confident either.</p>
DEMEANOR	<p>Be comfortable but do not lounge or sprawl. Seat yourself appropriately. A careless posture may lead the interview panel to conclude that you are not impressed by the importance of the occasion. This conclusion is natural, even if incorrect. Do not fuss with your clothing, a pencil, or any papers you might bring. Your hands may occasionally be useful to emphasize a point, but do not let your hands detract from your presentation by becoming a point of distraction.</p>
APPROPRIATE CONVERSATION	<p>Be pleasant but do not wisecrack or initiate extensive small talk. This is a business situation, and your attitude should show that you consider it as such. Further, the interview panel's time is limited; the panel does not want to waste it, and neither should you. However, participate appropriately if a panel member chooses to make small talk at the beginning of the interview to make you feel more comfortable.</p>

OVER-STATING	<p>Do not exaggerate your experience or abilities. In the first place the panel may know more about you than you think, having information from your application, other interviews in promotional examinations, and other sources. In the second place, you probably will not get away with it. An experienced interview panel is rather adept at spotting such a situation. Do not take this chance.</p>
EXISTING RELATIONSHIP	<p>Inform the panel chairperson if you discover that you are related to a member of the interview panel by blood, adoption, or current or prior marriage; or if you and a panel member are or were cohabitants. The panel member will be excused during your interview and will not participate in your rating as a competitor in the exam.</p>
INTERVIEW CONDUCTED BY PANEL	<p>Do not dominate the interview. Let the interview panel do its job. Do not assume that you have to do all of the talking. Realize that the panel has a number of questions to ask each candidate. Do not try to take up all the interview time by showing off your extensive knowledge. Be sure that you are prepared to present the highlights of your strengths to the panel when you are asked to do so or, if not asked, at the end of the interview.</p>
BE ATTENTIVE	<p>Usually, your interview lasts only 20 to 30 minutes. You should be very attentive throughout. When a panel member is presenting a problem or a question, give that person your undivided attention. Address your reply principally to that person but do not exclude eye contact with the other members of the panel.</p>
INTERRUPTIONS	<p>Do not interrupt. Panel members may be stating a problem for you to analyze. They will ask you a question when the time comes. Let the problem be stated and wait for the question.</p>
RESTATE THE QUESTION	<p>Make sure you understand the question. Do not try to answer until you are sure of the question. If the question is not clear, restate it in your own words or ask the panel to repeat it for you.</p>
REPLY PROMPTLY	<p>Reply promptly but not hastily. Respond as promptly as you can but do not give a hasty, ill-considered answer. It is all right to pause for a couple of seconds before answering. A brief answer is proper; but make sure it is complete.</p>
"CREATIVE" ANSWERS	<p>Do not try to create the answer you think the panel member wants. The panel is interested in how you analyze and solve problems, not in playing games. If you give an answer that you do not think is correct, you may have difficulty defending the correctness of the answer if you are asked further questions.</p>
BREVITY	<p>Keep your replies to the point. If you want to offer an illustration from your personal experience, be brief.</p>

MAINTAIN YOUR POSITION	<p>Do not switch sides in your reply merely to agree with a panel member. Sometimes a panel member will appear to support the reverse of your answer merely to draw you out and to see if you are willing and able to defend your point of view. Do not start a heated debate; yet, do not surrender a good position. If a position is worth taking, it is worth defending.</p>
ERROR IN JUDGMENT	<p>Do not be afraid to admit an error in judgment if you are shown to be wrong. The panel knows that you are forced to reply without the opportunity for careful, prolonged consideration of the issue. Your answer may be demonstrably wrong. If so, admit it and get on with the interview.</p>
TO THE POINT!	<p>State the duties of your present job briefly. Do not dwell at length on your present job. The opening question in the interview may relate to your present assignment. Answer the question by citing the highlights of your job but do not go into an extended discussion of every job duty assigned to you. You are being examined for a new classification, not your present one. Try to phrase all of your answers in terms of the work of the classification for which you are being examined.</p>
TECHNICAL JARGON	<p>Make sure that everyone can understand you. Keep your department's technical terminology, abbreviations, and acronyms out of your replies. Some members of the panel will probably not understand what you mean. If you have to explain a technical point, do so in the simplest way possible.</p>
SLANG	<p>Do not use slang or use words improperly. Many good replies have been weakened by the injection of slang or other language faults. Frequently, the panel will note any errors in grammar or diction or other evidence of carelessness in your speech.</p>
STRENGTHS	<p>Present your strengths in terms of how you could be of benefit to the department if hired. Do not emphasize "what is good for you."</p>
EXHIBITS	<p>Leave your exhibits at home. The interview panel does not have time to read every word of your letters of reference or copies of new procedures you have devised. Do not hand this material to the panel members but be prepared to tell them briefly about those items most closely related to the classification for which you are being examined.</p>

INTERVIEW PROCESS

PANEL

The interview panel is composed of the chairperson, one or more State service representatives, and, possibly, a public member. The chairperson has been trained to make sure that the interviews are administered in a fair and equitable manner, and the State service representatives usually work in the program area where the classification is used and are considered experts in the field. A public member is someone from the community who is also an expert in the field.

YOUR TURN

When your turn for the interview comes, you will be greeted by a panel member, who will escort you to the interview area. There you will be introduced to the other panel members and asked to take a seat.

The chairperson will explain the interviewing process. He or she may then have the State service representative describe the class you are being tested for, the use of the classification in the department and the location of anticipated openings.

RECORDING

You will probably notice that your interview is being recorded. The recording is required by law and is in your best interest.

**BEGINNING THE
INTERVIEW**

The interview may begin with a review of your application. You may be asked a general question, such as, "What aspects of your background do you think have best prepared you for this classification?" You may also be asked additional questions about your background and employment history.

The interview is now under way. The panel members will proceed to ask you questions that they feel will give them the best idea of your potential for the classification.

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

The questions for an examination are developed by subject-matter experts. For instance, an Office Services Supervisor III may develop questions for the Office Services Supervisor I examination. Or an Office Services Supervisor II may develop questions for an Office Assistant examination. The questions and the names of individuals who develop the questions are always confidential.

Questions are developed from the knowledge and abilities stated under "Scope" on the examination bulletin. Questions may be patterned or structured. (Patterned questions are used more frequently.) Interviews in which patterned or structured questions are used are similar in that the interview consists of several predetermined questions that are asked of **all candidates**, who are then rated competitively. However, when patterned questions are used, candidates are presented with the questions for the first time at the interview. When structured questions are used, the candidates will have received the questions in writing before the interview and will have had an opportunity to consider and formulate a response. They will then be asked to present that response during the interview.

[illegible]

The chairperson usually concludes the interview by asking if the candidate has anything to add. If you have a significant qualification to emphasize, or if you feel that something very important was overlooked, do speak up; but do so *briefly*. If you do not wish to speak, you may quite appropriately answer: “No, thank you.”

EVALUATION CRITERIA

REQUIREMENTS MET

After a review of your application, you may be accepted into an examination as meeting the minimum requirements for the classification. This acceptance does not necessarily ensure that you will have a place on the employment list. It is up to the interview panel to decide whether or not a candidate actually meets the minimum requirements and is competitive. The interview panel makes this decision based on the following:

1. The information that you provide concerning the breadth and depth of your knowledge, skills, education, and work experience.
 2. Your ability to analyze situations and develop an effective course of action if it applies to the classification for which you are being examined.
 3. The extent of your understanding of the questions being asked.
 4. Your ability to communicate.
 5. The directness of your response to questions.
 6. Your knowledge of the classification for which you have applied.
 7. Your display of genuine interest and enthusiasm for working in the classification.
 8. Your attitude toward and aptitude for accepting increased responsibilities.
 9. Your ability to relate experience to the classification.
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EXAMINATION APPEAL PROCESS



UNFAIRLY TREATED	<p>If you are refused admittance to an examination or if you feel that you have been treated unfairly in some way during the testing process, you may file an appeal. Your appeal will be reviewed by the State Personnel Board. If the appeal concerns an interview, the State Personnel Board may, as part of its investigation, review the recording of your interview to determine whether you were treated fairly and equitably. At the conclusion of its investigation, the State Personnel Board decides whether to sustain or reject the appeal. State departments will abide by the Board's decision.</p>
APPEAL FORM	<p>A copy of Form SPB 345 (State Personnel Board Examination Appeal Form) may be obtained from the testing office. The form details the information you must provide when you file your appeal. It must be filed within 30 days of the postmark on the envelope that contains your rejection notice or notice of results (e.g., written test, performance test, interview).</p>
YOUR APPEAL RIGHTS	<p>The testing office considers providing information about appeal rights as part of its job. Don't ever feel reluctant to request the information. The testing office will be glad to help you.</p>